DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 054 772 JC 710 237

AUTHOR Nichols, Suzanne

TITLE Model for Participatory Governance for Community Colleges.

PUB DATE 71

NOTE 11p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29

DESCRIPTORS *Administration; *Administrative Change; *Administrative Organization; *Governance; *Junior Colleges

ABSTRACT

A model for participatory governance is developed as a means to better achieve the community college's broad goals and objectives. These are contrasted with those of 4-year institutions using student screening and selection devices, and high schools with their different educational emphasis. It presents the conflict faced by the community college: an institution that is charged with providing instruction to meet the societal needs of all persons over 18, but that must generally operate with a staff-line administrative structure reminiscent of high schools and a curriculum generally paralleling the university's freshman and sophomore years. The Board of Trustee's role is reviewed and its responsibility for producing a favorable atmosphere in which professionals might extend themselves creatively is emphasized. Actual implementation and support for this thrust of creativity are administrative functions. How to accomplish this goal is suggested in the model for participatory governance. The explanatory organization chart displays the model of governance as participation with directors and divisions in lieu of the more traditional dean system. It is concluded that use of this model increases accountability at all levels, both administrative and instructional. (AL)

ED054772

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

MODEL FOR PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGES

by

Suzanne Nichols

1971

It is well documented that there is an increasing need for people to have a profession or skill, developed through education or training beyond the high school level; being a high school graduate no longer is enough to guarantee an adequate standard of living. (1) Furthermore, these studies maintain, education and training in skills benefits not only the receiving individual, but society as well. As a matter of investment in human capital, therefore, it has become public policy in Michigan to provide opportunity for all educable people to take such training as they are able to take, regardless of their financial resources.

The purpose of the four-year university or college has been to provide students with opportunities to gain an understanding of the nature of the physical and social sciences and of their cultural heritage as well as to provide them for an occupation in a profession such as law, medicine or teaching. To this end, these institutions have believed it necessary to develop a system of sorting, or screening. Admissions and performance standards have been set which by their nature exclude a portion of the population. Financial resources necessary to attend these institutions serve as still another "sorting" factor. It is necessary, therefore, for society to furnish some other type of educational facilities if it is to meet its obligations to those who for one reason or another can not attend a

JC 710 237

UNIVERSITY OF CALIF.
LOS ANGELES

NOV 10 1971

CLEARINGHOUSE FOR
JUNIOR COLLEGE
INFORMATION

traditional institution of higher education.

Such an institution has evolved; the comprehensive community college. The philosophy and function of the community college is very different from that of the four-year baccalaureate institution. In exact contrast to the academic programs and selective admissions policy, the community college adheres to the open-door policy that admits high school graduates and for that matter, any other adults who apply. (2) It offers two-year college parallel academic programs, vocational and technical programs and functions as a community center, offering educational and recreational courses on a non-credit basis and facilities for community cultural activities.

However, the community college is not an extension of the high school, a concept that is sometimes difficult to sustain because of the community centeredness of the institituion; the fact that it is governed by a local board of trustees and financed in part by local property taxes. It is a flexible, viable institution of higher education whose purpose is to serve its community's special needs.

It is evident from the foregoing that the unique nature of a community college requires unique administration and organization. Neither the secondary school nor the four-year college serves adequately as a model. Since many of the existing community colleges were begun as two-year institutions offering freshman and sophomore college programs, the organizational structure has tended to be along the line of the traditional four-year college. See Figure I for a graphic presentation of the typical community college organizational structure as is evidenced by reading community college catalogs.

At the same time, the community college has inherited a staff-line type of administration characteristic of public school systems, no doubt because of the community setting and service function and because of the fact that faculty has tended to be recruited from local sources, i.e., the local secondary schools and the building and trades industries. (3)

The purpose here is to set forth an administrative philosophy and a proposed organizational structure for the staffing of a community college. A schematic presentation of the proposed organizational structure is presented in Figure 2.

Board of Trustees

The most important role of the trustees lies in creating a climate which is conducive to creative, ambitious, and satisfying work on the part of the college staff and faculty. There is little question that the board has under the terms of the Michigan Constitution and subsequent legislation (4) the legal power to govern the institution. The problems that are created by many current attempts to exercise this power are identified by Newman who states,

> The entire institution legally comes under the trustees' domain. At the same time, no governing body has competency to oversee all the complexities of modern institutions of higher learning. Some powers must be delegated. This (lack of delegation) is the basis for most of the problems. (5)

How much power should be designated, to whom, and for what reasons is not always self evident. One community college trustee, G. I. Hall, says that the old-fashion notion that a psychic distance must be maintained between the trustees, administration and faculty is archaic. (6) He does not suggest fraternization but rather a definite plan to establish communication channels. Hall specifically recommends the "retreat", faculty reports to the board, and joint meetings. He recognizes that there are many systems

and plans to bring the groups together and what works for one may not for another. The important note here is that trustee-faculty acquaintance is to be encouraged so that mutual respect may be developed. When this happens, the trustees can share the legal authority which by law has been delegated to them.

Richardson, a community college president, indicates his agreement with Hall when he says:

> Trustees need to refrain from injecting the organizational biases they have picked up through their own occupational activities. They need to be well informed of the activities and concerns of each of the centers of influence defined within the institution...to this end, the administration must work carefully to establish communication channels so that the students and faculty can communicate directly with the board, as does the administration...The board of trustees must not forget that the effectiveness with which it functions is as dependent upon the delegation of authority of those who serve within the institution as it is upon the delegation of authority through the charter or enabling legislation. (7)

It is recognized that the Board of Trustees occupies a position of trust; it is responsible to the taxpayer. However, it is proposed here that the Board serve not as a legislating body per se, but a body to which appeals may be brought by various segments of the college community.

This philosophy of shared authority and decision making is indicated by the organizational model, Figure 2. The Board of Trustees is not directly related to any part of the structure. In a traditional structure (Figure 1) the president would be directly responsible to the board and all communication to and from the board would flow through him. Here, since there is no direct line to be observed, communication may flow directly to and from all parts of the institution.

Administration

Traditionally, administrators are regarded as at the apex of a bureaucratic pyramid. Faculty and students have had little, or at most, token voice in the development of regulations. However, decisions concerning employment, salary matters, promotion, tenure for the faculty; admission standards, curricula for the students are matters that could well be left in the hands of those primarily concerned. The proposal here is to assign to the administration the task of institutional development, i.e., the determination of priorities as they relate to the allocation of institutional resources.

Richardson outlines the logical role of the administration in what he calls the "participatory model of governance." (8) His thesis is based on the absense of subordinate-superordinate relationships. (9) Specifically he mentions long range planning for physical facilities and programming, public relations activities, and the coordinating of the internal constituencies of the college as the main functions to be carried out by the chief administrator and his cabinet. He states:

> Governance will not however by by majority vote. Administrators are selected to make decisions and to ensure efficient functioning of the institutions...(but) more significant is the fact that the decision of the chief administrator...will be subject to review and appeal when such decisions are found to be inappropriate by those affected.

In short, the administration will be accountable to the faculty and to the students just as it is accountable to the Board of Trustees. The concept is, again, one of shared authority and a community approach to the formulation of policy decisions. The administration, as shown on the organization chart, Figure 2, is composed of the president and four directors. A break with

traditional academic nomenclature is suggested here. The word dean denotes one who is in charge of others. The use of the words "director for" indicates, instead, the service and cooperative role suggested by the model. The open boxes are used to indicate graphically the philosophy of shared authority and free-flow communication. The administration, it is emphasized, will be entrusted with the long range planning for the institution and will serve a coordinating function; it will not serve as the control group at the head of the organization. A sample of the types of services to be coordinated by each director is suggested in Figure II.

It is not surprising that collective bargaining has arrived on the community college campus. The management-worker relationship that has been typical of the typical academic structure has created a situation whereby a cold war between the administrators and the faculty has become almost an accepted condition of academic life.

Walsh says

> As members of the college community, trustees, administrators, and faculty are engaged in a unity of purpose which makes communication between teachers and administrators necessary if educational objectives can be attained...The unique role of the community college and the quality of its program cannot be achieved in an atmosphere of mutual distrust, suspicion and turmoil. (11)

The faculty consists of practicing professionals. As such, its professional behavior should not be subject to administrative supervision or review. Richardson suggests instead a professional review committee of senior practitioners who would serve as the primary reference group with respect to making recommendations on matters such as initial appointment, promotion, eligibility for salary increases, and other areas primarily related to professional competence. (12) This suggestion has been incorporated

in the organizational model in the form of division heads who will work with the director for instructional affairs. The divisions represent another break with traditional academic structure. The advantage of divisional over departmental organization for the community college is that it provides a minimum number of administrative unit. Furthermore, and perhaps more importantly, it eliminates an overt split between transfer and terminal education students and faculty. Koehnline and Blocker made this point convincingly as they state

> "...the only effective way to prevent destructive competition, is to prevent the development of mutually exclusive groupings that will tend to become each other's competitors. One way to prevent the liberal arts faculty from looking down on the trades and industry faculty...is to structure the faculty in such a way that a choosing up of sides...is difficult and unnatural rather than inevitable. (13)

The division chairman has the responsibility for faculty programs and courses and for the actual teaching within his division. He initiates recruitment of faculty, and supervises the evaluation of faculty in his division, making recommendations for salary increments, promotions, granting of tenure, or if necessary, dismissal. He assigns teaching load and related activities to his faculty and assists and supports them through counseling and professional advice. He will also teach.

The division chairmen, however, will not have final say on matters of faculty concern and welfare. A representative faculty organization will have the authority to make the fundamental decisions that relate to its areas of professional competency. These rights will include the determination of many matters that are traditionally considered to be administrative duties. The faculty organization will have the right to appeal issues to the board of trustees.

Conclusion

The roles just discussed evolve into a form of governance that emphasizes limiting the responsibilities of the board of trustees, the administration, and the faculty. This model is characterized by accountability and coordinated through the administrative group. Disputes are to be resolved by the trustees in most instances; however, in some areas of special concern such as salary negotiations, there should be machinery set up for the use of external mediating agencies if the need arises.

The success of such a plan will inevitably depend upon highly developed procedures for consultation and communication between and among the three groups. The first crucial step: select a chief administrator who by virtue of his past experience and personality, can prove to be able to function within the framework of a democratic leadership model. (14)

TYPICAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION

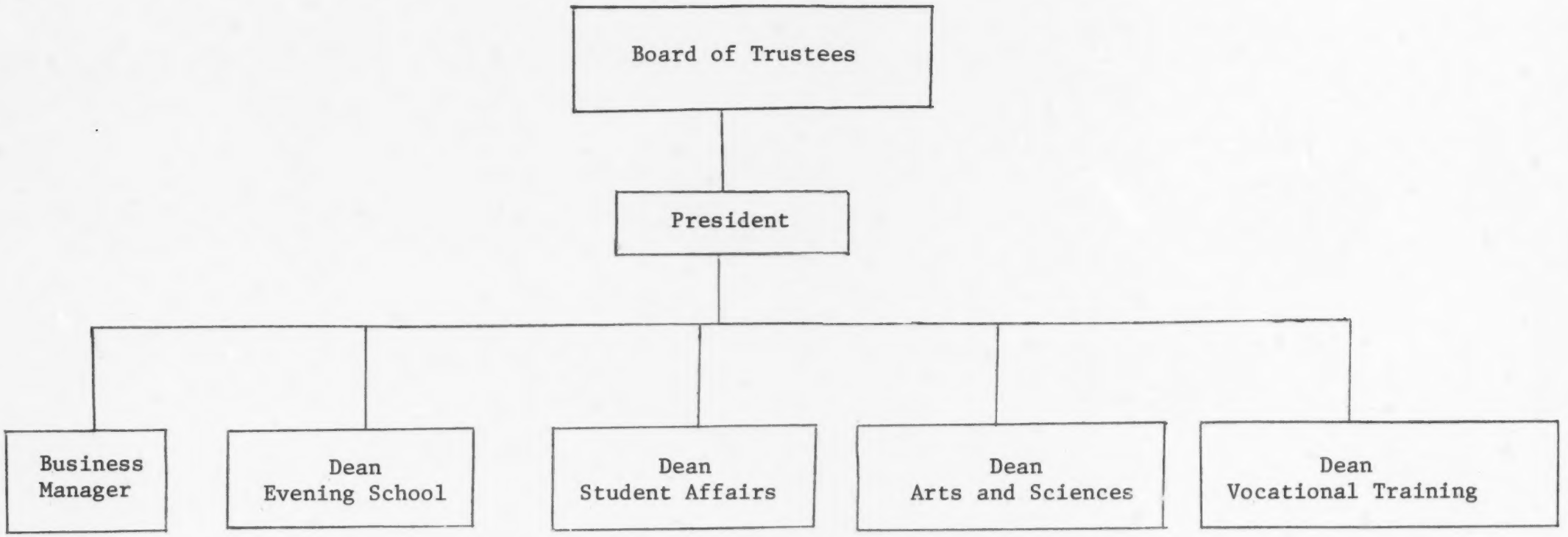

FIGURE I

MODEL COMMUNITY COLLEGE ORGANIZATIONAL MODEL

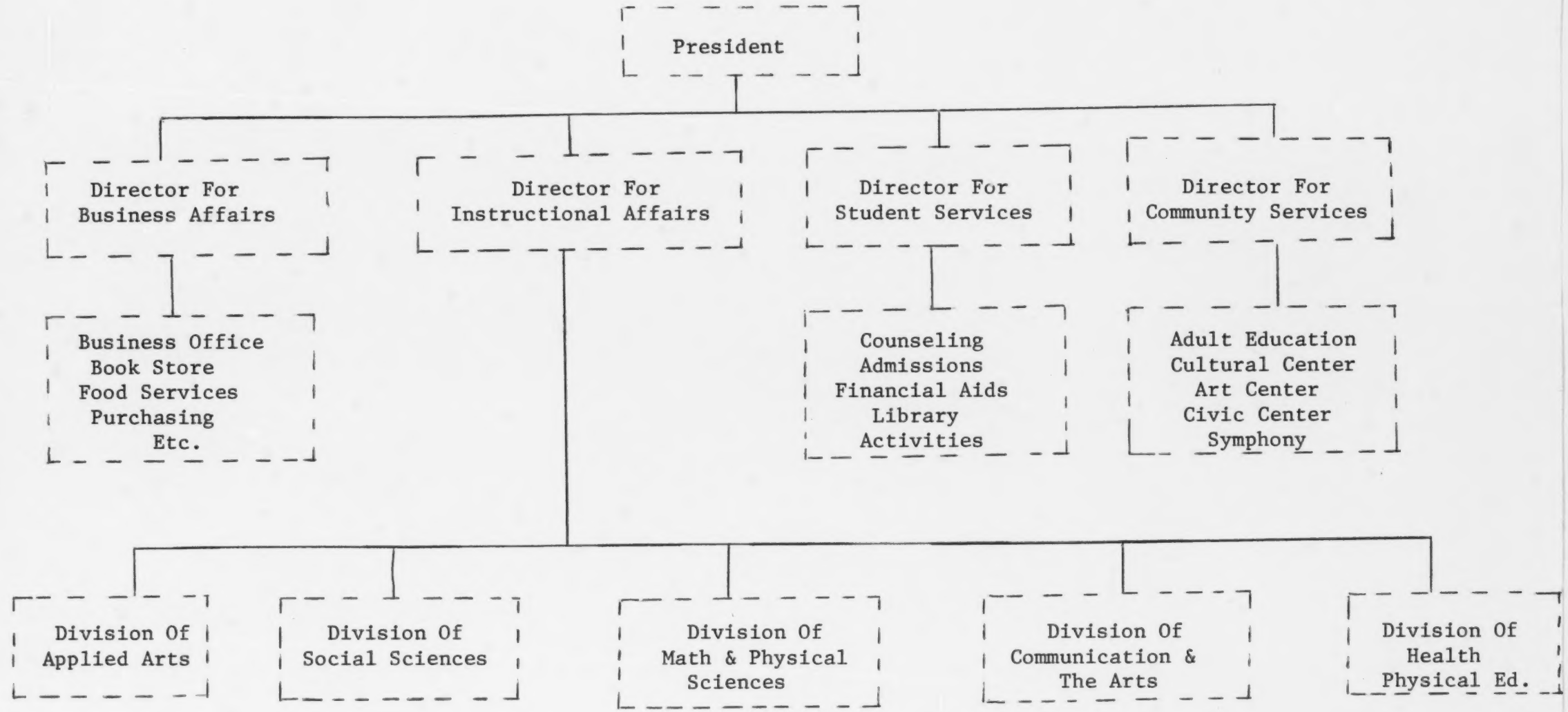

FIGURE II

FOOTNOTES

1. State Plan for Higher Education in Michigan, Michigan Department of Education, 1969, p. 11-21. See also Michigan Manpower Study, Battelle Memorial Institute, 1966 and Michigan Technical Needs Study, James Kelly, 1967.

2. "Open Door Admissions in Michigan Community Colleges, A 1970 Policy Statement issued by the Community College Board of Education," m., 1970.

3. "Encouraging Constructive Faculty-Administrator Relationships," James Walsh in Buffalo Studies, 1966, Vol. 1, p. 145.

4. Laws, Statutes, and Constitutional Provisions Affecting Community Colleges in Michigan, Michigan Department of Education, 1970, p. 27.
5. William H. Newman, Administrative Action, Englewood Cliffs, N.J., Prentice-Hall, 1950 as cited in "Ten Commandments for Trustees," George L. Hall, Junior College Journal, 1966, Vol. 36, p. 27.

6. Ibid., p. 26.

7. "Restructuring in Human Dimensions of Our Colleges," Richard C. Richardons, Jr., in Junior College Journal, 1971, Vol. 41, p. 24.

8. Ibid., p. 23.

9. "Social Behavior and the Administrative Process," J. W. Getzels and E. G. Guba, m., p. 1.

10. Richardson, op. cit., p. 23.

11. Walsh, op. cit., p. 145.

12. Richardson, op. cit., p. 22.

13. "The Division Chairman in the Community College," William Koehnline and Clyde Blocker, Junior College Journal, 1970, Vol. 40, p. 10.

14. "Administrative Style," Donald O. Bush, m.